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**SERMON VII.**

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**WOMAN'S WORK IN TIME OF WAR.**

"SHE hath done what she could."—MARK xiv : 8.

AN enviable immortality is accorded to Mary of Bethany, not only in the world of glory, but here on the earth. Hers is an honored name ; has been for nearly 2,000 years, and will be until the day of doom. A place is given her in the sacred record ; and wherever the scriptures go, her name and her labor of love will be had in remembrance ; " Verily I say unto you, whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she has done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." So spake the Redeemer of men ; and wonderfully, to the present time, has the prediction been fulfilled. While, of the gay and the great, the proud and the pampered, daughters of wealth and fashion, who were flattered and courted, admired and idolized, at Jerusalem and Damascus, at Antioch and Alexandria, at Corinth, at Ephesus and at Rome, the very names, with but rare exceptions, have utterly perished, the name of this humble and obscure maiden of the village of

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Bethany has obtained an elevated place on the scroll of Fame, and will "be held in everlasting remembrance."

"How and why is this," it may well be asked. What entitles her to this distinction? What were her endowments of person, her attainments in science, her brilliant exploits in the service of the State, that she should have thus been singled out from the millions of her co-ævals, and made the recipient of such marked favor on the part of "the Prince of the house of David?" It does not appear that hers was the graceful person, the fair complexion, and the beauteous features of a Trojan Helen; or the voluptuous form and fascinating grace of a Cleopatra of Egypt; that she excelled in the "poetry of motion," and captivated the hearts of the multitude by the elegance of her dress, the brilliancy of her jewels, and the exquisite finesse of her whole deportment. Not an intimation is given us, that she belonged to an aristocratic circle, was of noble descent, mingled with "the best society," and shared in the honors of the royal court. Nothing of the kind. Herod had never heard of her. She had never figured at a "reception" in the pro-consular saloons of Pilate; was a stranger in the halls of Caiaphas. That she was the daughter of song, a proficient in the use of the psaltery and harp, a sweet singer of Israel like Deborah of old, a gifted composer, a brilliant essayist, or poetess, or novelist, is not to be supposed, in the absence of all evidence.

In none of the varied attractions, which ordinarily give our female celebrities all their distinction and fame, does the sister of Lazarus and Martha of Bethany seem to have excelled. Had such, and such only, been her claims to an honorable place on the historic page, long since, as in the case of the millions of her sex, who have been petted and praised, and have ruled the hour in their day and generation, her name would have passed away, and her memory would have perished.

To what, then, is it owing, that we ourselves are this day recalling her name with commendation, and holding her up for the admiration of mankind? The simple narrative of the biographers of Jesus gives us all that we know in the case, and furnishes the only solution of the historic problem. Our Lord was a guest at the house of Simon, a citizen of Bethany. As he was reclining at the supper-table, according to the custom of the Orientals, Lazarus and his sisters being also of the number of the guests, the younger of the sisters having brought with her, to the supper, an alabaster box of very costly ointment or perfume, watching an opportunity, broke the casket and poured its very precious contents upon the person of Jesus, anointing both his head and feet, and wiping the latter with the profuse tresses of the hair of her head. This was all—nothing more.

It was not much—a very simple act—customary in royal halls ; in the palace, though not in the humble dwelling ; scarcely worthy such honorable mention, as the world regard it ; yea, even deemed and spoken of at the time as a piece of extravagance, a waste of costly substance, the avails of which might have been of great service to the poor and needy. And yet it secures the approbation of the Master, and draws from his gracious lips the meed of praise and commendation ; while at the same time it sends her name down to posterity, with a more grateful perfume, than that with which she anointed the body of our Lord.

What was there, then, in this occurrence to command, so remarkably, the approbation of the Redeemer ? It was an expression of grateful attachment to Him, to whom she owed her emancipation from the thralldom of sin, and her introduction into the fellowship and hopes of the children of God ; an attachment rendered the more intense, by the wonderful interposition of her Lord, in delivering her only brother from the bondage of death and the grave. It was the utmost, too, that she could do to relieve her bursting heart, and to honor her adored Benefactor. She is not rich ; she is in humble circumstances ; she has no influence at court ; none scarcely beyond her own humble habitation. What can she do, to honor her Saviour, that shall be at all commensurate with his worth, and that shall fitly express the greatness of her obligations, the depth of her gratitude, and the ardor of her love to Him, to whom she owes her all ? She has nought but this goodly alabaster-box, the gift, it may be, of a departed friend ; a precious legacy, perhaps, from a beloved parent, "passed into the skies." Precious as it is, it is none too good to be bestowed on Him, whose very "name is as ointment poured forth"—more fragrant than the most costly frankincense. It is her all, and she gives it—gives it all, and gives it with all her heart.

"She hath done," saith Jesus, "what she could;" all that was in her power to do ; given to the extent of her means ; withheld nothing that was in her power ; deemed nothing that she had too costly a sacrifice, as an expression of the greatness of her love. It is accepted, as it was meant. It is a grateful incense to our Lord. He commends her before the whole company, vindicates her from the charge of extravagance, brought against her by the sly thief, Iscariot ; and imputes to the act a significance greater far than she had even contemplated. "She hath wrought a good work on me ;" "she is come beforehand to anoint my body to the burying." She knows it not, but such is the fact. "I am on the way to the grave," as if he had said, "and the ointment, with which her grateful love has perfumed my person

has prepared it for the burial." He puts it to a use, of which she had not, at the time, the most distant conception.

How ready we are, when urged to contribute of our resources, of money, of time, or of service, to reply, in heart at least, "It is but little, at the best, that I can do; poor, unfriended and unknown, what can I do? how can I be of any service? 'I pray thee have me excused.' Go to them who have abundance of this world's goods, who have learning and influence. I am but a poor lone woman—what can I do?" Little know we, or can we know, in this dark world, the use, to which a kind word, an humble effort to do good, a small, an insignificant gift may be put in the evolutions of divine Providence. The lightest feather will turn the nicely balanced scale. The cup of cold water, given to a weary soldier, may arrest the fleeting tide of life, and convert impending defeat into speedy victory. You know not to how many uses God may put that little contribution, that you are ready to withhold because of its insignificance. No small part of the delight, with which your soul will be filled in the world of glory, will flow beyond a doubt, from a discovery of the blessedness, that you were enabled to diffuse among your fellow-men, by reason of the feeble endeavors, that, with so much misgiving, you were induced to put forth in the cause of humanity and God,—blessedness flowing on from small beginnings, till, like the Great Father of waters, the noble Mississippi, it fertilizes and gladdens vast tracts of Time to the very borders of Eternity.

"The good begun by thee shall onward flow,  
In many a branching stream, and wider grow;  
The seed that, in these few and fleeting hours,  
Thy hands unsparing and unwearied sow,  
Shall deck thy grave with amaranthine flowers,  
And yield thee fruits divine in Heaven's immortal bowers."

What, though it is not given you to take the lead of "the sacramental host of God's elect;" to occupy any of the high places of power; to be recognized by the great, the honorable, and the wealthy; and to share with them in their far-reaching schemes of benevolence; or to do what it is in your heart to do? What, though your gifts are not, and can not be, counted by thousands, or hundreds, or fifties, or tens, yet be they your all, like the widow's mites, they are greater far, in the sight of the Master, than those who, of their abundance, give their thousands, and yet have other thousands to bestow upon their heirs, or to expend in the gratification of every desire of their heart? To have the Great Searcher of hearts say of you, "She hath done what she could," is more—ininitely more, than to occupy the first place for liberality in the Annual Reports of Benevolence.

Nor yet should you shrink from giving and doing, and, if need be, suffering, too, in the cause of heaven-born charity, because

your good may "be evil spoken of;" because a carping, caviling world may deem and speak of what you do as contemptible; or impute to you an evil mind, an unworthy purpose, sinister designs, and improper motives. So Iscariot did in the case of Mary; and others, as the world are ever ready to do, harped upon the same string. Enough for you, it should be, if "the Lord, the righteous Judge," takes you under his protection, and makes your reputation his constant care; saying, to every captious and narrow-minded assailant, "She hath done what she could."

A most valuable lesson is to be learned, by us all, from these words of our Lord. The services that we render to God and man in this lower world, are to be estimated, not according to their apparent greatness and multitude, but according to the measure of our ability. That ability varies, and depends upon our natural capacities, or endowments, both of body and of mind; our providential advantages for the improvement of these capacities, and the cultivation of these endowments, such as are derived from inheritance, rank and station, education, wealth and credit; the gifts and graces, also, of the Spirit bestowed, in less or greater degrees upon us, under the use of the means of renewing and sanctifying grace; and the occasions and opportunities, afforded us, for the exercise of our gifts and graces; including also all lets and hindrances. If, in the careful and honest review of all these, we can truly say,—*"I have done what I could,"* in reference to the duties devolving upon us, in the way of benevolence and beneficence, we may confidently expect to hear the Master say to us, at the last—*"Well done, good and faithful servant!"*

But it is to the Marys and the Marthas, the sisters and the daughters of men, that the Saviour more specifically speaks in these encouraging words; and to them, more particularly, I design to apply them on the present occasion. I come to you, my sisters, in a season of trial, of trouble, of great and serious calamity; a season of sanguinary conflict between brethren; a time of terrific apprehensions, of bitter grief, of wide-spread desolations; in the midst of the greatest political perils to which our nation has ever been subjected, and of the most gigantic insurrection against established law and order, ever witnessed on earth; to plead with you in behalf of your beleaguered, distracted, imperilled country; to ask and intreat of you, every one, to do what you can for her salvation, for her rescue, for her real good and true glory.

The issues of this impending strife are of the most momentous character. Exaggerated, they can scarcely be, so vast, so gigantic, are the interests involved. It is not a question of dollars and cents, of free trade or protection; of state or national rights; of metes and bounds to territory. It is a question of

national life, of eternal principles, of the vastest issues that ever engaged the attention or tasked the energies of the children of men. Whatever may have been the immediate occasion, or the proximate cause of the strife, and whatever the professions or the pretences of those by whose audacious and impious hands the banner of rebellion was first unfurled, it is a conflict long anticipated and premeditated; repeatedly threatened these 30 years and more, and iniquitously provoked, between might and right; between barbarism and civilization; between despotic dominion and constitutional law; between Slavery and Freedom. It is not the enslavement of the African alone, but of the American also. It is not the extension of the system of Slavery over the free Territories alone, but over all the Free States; and the crushing out, at the North, of all freedom of speech and opinion, as, for so long a time, and much more now, at the South. It is the usurpation of all Federal Power at Washington, and the subjection of the whole people of the United States, to the rule of the terrific despotism, that is now treading under its iron heel the whole population of the Southern States. Men of the maturest judgment, of the clearest discernment, and of the most conservative tendencies, not given to extravagant or radical opinions, are everywhere coming to the conclusion that this Nation is henceforth to be either a Pro-slavery Confederacy, from Maine to California, or a No-slavery Nation, from the Lakes to the Gulf. Providentially, the great problem of national self-government is now in the process of solution. It is to be decided, in the result of this great contest, whether Man is capable of directing and sustaining the processes of a free, just, and equitable Constitutional Government, by rulers of his own choosing; or needs the rigid and despotic system, that has so long prevailed in the old world, and that now rules, with a rod of iron, so large a portion of the nations of the earth. Such are the momentous issues, that are involved, for weal or for woe, in this gigantic strife.

It is a contest in which you and I, with every inhabitant of this western world, bond or free, have the deepest interest. Everything that is dear to us, in the free institutions inherited from our fathers, and bought for us, with their toils, their sufferings, and their blood,—in the possessions that we have acquired, or have in prospect,—and in the homes, that are endeared to us by so many tender and delightful associations and recollections,—is imperiled by this vile conspiracy against human rights. It has, already, made its baleful influence felt in every branch of business, in every ramification of trade, in social as well as commercial life, and, most of all, in the awful sacrifice of human life. The wife, the sister, the daughter and the mother, are mourning to-day, in almost every hamlet of the land, because their loved



ones, the husband, the brother, the son and the father are no more—cut down by the ruthless hand of Rebellion—a sacrifice to the insatiate demon of Despotism, that is scattering “fire-brands, arrows and death” all over the land. Hundreds of thousands of bleeding, broken hearts are testifying to day that woman's interests in the issues of this war are not less at stake than man's—that none, in fact, are suffering more from it than she. They who receive the shock of battle, who breast the tide of war, who fall by the murderous bullet, shot or shell, maimed or slain, on the gory field, who languish and die in the foul prisons of the foe, or in our own military and naval hospitals, are hers,—her dearest treasures—her life-blood. Hers is the living anguish; theirs a speedier death. None have so deep an interest in the war as woman—none suffer from it as much. None are so much concerned in its speedy and honorable termination. The case admits of no compromise. The battle of freedom must be fought, once for all. The country needs the services of all its people—young and old—male and female.

What can woman do for her country, in these perilous times? you are ready to ask. Could you fight as man can, I doubt not you would be as ready as he to shoulder the musket, buckle on the sword, and march, to defend the land and its institutions against the ruthless foe. But yours it is not to dwell in the tented field, or to swell the ranks of the warrior-host. Yours are the peaceful avocations of domestic and social life. The death-dealing shell may not be sent on its terrific errand, until you have been removed beyond its reach. You can bear no part at all in “the tug of war,” or “on the perilous edge of battle.” And yet you cannot be content to bear no part whatever in the strife,—cannot consent to be observers unconcerned of the conflict. You must be at work in some way for the cause of your country. And you ask, what can I do to help on the glorious cause for which my country's sons are pouring out their blood even to the death? I reply,

I. *You can feel for your country.* Yours, in a peculiar degree, pre-eminently, is the province of the emotions. None can rival you in sensibility, in the tenderness of affection, in the depth of passion, in the ardor of love. You can feel for our brave soldiers, and do feel for them, as none else can or do. You can not read, or hear, or think, of their privations, their exposures, their hardships, their sufferings, their sicknesses, their wounds, their fearful anticipations of a bloody and excruciating death, without having the very depths of your being stirred up, and your inmost soul excited to do something for their speedy relief. The more you shrink and hear, the more you feel; and therefore you should not shrink from the gory vision of the battlefield, however shocking it may be to your nervous system. You can keep yourselves in-

formed of the wants and the woes of the noble warriors who are fighting your battles, and jeopardizing their lives even unto death for your lives and sacred honor.

"We know," said the women of the Revolution to the patriot army of Washington, "that at a distance from the theatre of war, if we enjoy any tranquility, it is the fruit of your watchings, your labors, your dangers." But for our patriotic soldiers, their toils, their sufferings, their libations of blood on the country's altars, you and I would not be dwelling so quietly and so securely in our peaceful habitations to-day.

The value of this sympathy none know so well as they. It is their life. It nerves their arms; it inspires their souls; it fires their hearts. They know how earnestly, how intensely, their loved ones at home are feeling for them, how your thoughts are with them, how your hearts bleed for them. Your smiles, your approbation, your love they regard as a sufficient reward for all their sacrifices. "The army," said Washington to a company of Pennsylvania and Jersey ladies, "ought not to regret its sacrifices or sufferings, when they meet with so flattering a reward, as in the sympathy of your sex."

Not only can you feel for your country in her time of peril, but

II. *You can give expression to your feelings.*—Ordinarily you find no difficulty in making known what is in your heart. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

1. You can write to your kindred in the army and navy. Let them know that you bear them on your hearts; have not forgotten them; cannot forget them; and are doing for them all that you can. Such missives are worth their weight in gold; they cheer the lone heart of the soldier; they revive in him the fondest recollections; they restrain his waywardness; they withhold him from temptation; they spur him on to deeds of valor and heroism; they are "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

2. You can speak a good word for your country; none can excel you in the gift of speech; in the art of talking. We often envy you the ease, the readiness, the fluency, and the affluence of your speech. It is a powerful talent, a mighty weapon, and you know how to wield it. It is just as easy to commend as it is to defame, and far more honorable. We have croakers, carpers, cavers, grumblers in abundance. Some among us can never utter a good word for our self-sacrificing Generals, our true-hearted President, and our overtasked Cabinet, without some detracting qualification,—some, not a good word even. We have a class of writers for the press, who seem to regard themselves as supervisors of the Government, and infinitely better skilled in the art and science of peace and war than the President and all his secreta-



ries ; than Congress and all the judiciary ; than all our Generals and Admirals. Daily the din of their complainings is poured into our ears, until we almost doubt whether we have a country or not worth living for. Believe them not ; trust them not ; speak out for our chosen President. "He is the minister of God to thee for good." Sustain him by your loyal words of confidence. Disparage not the men whom he selects, under the very best advice, to conduct our public affairs, and to lead our armies. If you cannot praise, be sparing of blame. Let not the asperser of your country's cause receive the least encouragement from your lips. Be true-hearted, in all your talk, to the cause of your bleeding country, and frown upon treason and traitors, however slyly and covertly they endeavor to diffuse the poison of their principles. Arnold, but for his wife, would never have betrayed his country. But for the encouragement given to rebellion by the fair traitors of the South, the conspiracy would have died a natural death.

3. You can contribute of your substance to your country's help. If God has given you pecuniary means, you owe it to the excellent system of government that has thrown its all-powerful protection about you and yours. If this be gone, what have you left. "Freely ye have received, freely give." Give what you can, and as you can, little or much, to alleviate the sufferings of your country's brave defenders, and to promote their comfort. To this end,

4. You can deny yourselves for your country—can practice a rigid economy in diet and in dress—in the reduction of your wardrobe to the standard of your wants, rather than of pride and fashion ; that you may have the more to give to those who have lost their all, and put their lives in jeopardy for your sake. We have been the most profuse and extravagant in our domestic expenditures, for some few, for many, years previous to the war, of any people on the face of the earth. Enough can be saved, in this respect, if you will, to pay the expenses of the war. The taxes that are to be imposed upon us to pay for the suppression of the rebellion, can be fully met by your retrenchments.

One of the patriot sisters of Philadelphia, in the days of the Revolution, wrote to a British officer in these words : "I have retrenched every superfluous expense in my table and family ; tea I have not drunk since last Christmas ; nor bought a new cap or gown since your defeat at Lexington ; and, what I never did before, have learned to knit, and am now making stockings of American wool for my servants ; and this way do I throw in my mite to the public good. I know this, that as free I can die but once ; but as a slave I should not be worthy of life. I have the pleasure to assure you that these are the sentiments of all my sister Americans. They have sacrificed assemblies, parties of pleasure,

tea-drinking and finery, to that great spirit of patriotism, that actuates all degrees of people throughout this extensive continent." Associations were formed in every part of the land, by our Revolutionary mothers, in which they pledged themselves to renounce the use of teas and other imported luxuries, and to card, spin, and weave their own clothing. "Shall we hesitate," they said in their address to the Patriot army, "to wear clothing more simple, and dress less elegant, while, at the price of this small privation, we shall deserve your benedictions?"

5. You can work for your country. In a thousand ways you can promote the comfort of your sons and brothers, your husbands and fathers, in the camp, in the conflict, on the march, and in the hospital. You can prepare such delicacies for the sick as only your hands know how; such alleviations for the wounded as no commissary department can provide—lint and bandages, and under-garments of every description, and extra suits for the long weary days and weeks of sickness and pining melancholy, in the cheerless hospital. It is not much, perhaps, individually, that you can do; but much in the aggregate, yea much individually, too, if, as the blessed Jesus, "who went about doing good," looks down upon you, he can say of each of you, "She hath done what she could." Who of you would do less?

So, also, you can visit the families of our soldiers, and minister to them in their privations,—the widows and the orphans of the slain,—the sick and the wounded of the army that are brought to their homes, or linger in our city hospitals,—cheering them by your smiles, and encouraging them by your kindly words and substantial deeds of sympathy.

You can contribute your loved ones for your country. Like Abraham, lay your Isaacs on the altar, committing them to Him who is able to keep them, and restore them to you. At least you can determine to put no obstacle in the way, to allow them to act for themselves, at the bidding of their own conscience. Why others, and not you? Finally,

6. You can pray for your country, and commit her cause daily to the all-efficacious intervention of the Great King, in whom only is our refuge and defence.

## SERMON VIII.

BY REV. EDWIN F. HATFIELD, D. D., NEW YORK CITY.

## WOMAN'S WORK IN TIME OF WAR.

"Help those women who labored with me in the gospel."—PHIL. 4 : 3.

A prisoner at Rome, and a sufferer for Christ, his Lord and Master, Paul addresses himself to the church at Philippi, where he had, in other days, so effectually labored in the gospel. Much has he to say of their faith, their zeal and their liberality. Great is his rejoicing in the remembrance of their works and labors of love, and of the grace bestowed upon them by the Great Head of the church. They have proved themselves a faithful church, and therefore God has made them a flourishing church. Cordial are the salutations that he sends to those among them, who have distinguished themselves for their labors, their self-denials, and their sacrifices for Christ and his cause. He bears them upon his heart; thanks his God at every remembrance of them; and always, in every prayer that he offers, commends them joyfully and hopefully to the grace of God.

Nor does he forget that no small part, in bringing about these happy results, was borne by the feebler sex. The very first among them to receive and embrace the gospel of Christ was one of a company of women, to whom he preached his first sermon at Philippi—his first in fact in all Europe. It pleased the Lord to open the heart of Lydia, and probably of others of their number; though hers is the only name among them that has come down to us through the ages; unless Euodias and Syntyche, mentioned in verse 2, and to whom many suppose the Apostle refers in the text, were of the number that "attended unto the things which were spoken" by Paul in the *προσευχη*, or chapel, by the "river side." Lydia is named, because of her prompt reception of the gospel into her heart, and of Paul and Silas, Luke and Timothy, into her house. She not only becomes a convert herself, but, as much as in her is, she seeks to bring others also to the knowledge of "the truth" as it "is in Jesus." She makes an open profession, by baptism, of her faith in the Christian religion, and consecrates her house and her household, too, to the Lord. At her house, most probably, the first church, founded by an Apostle in Europe, was organized, and thence the word of the Lord sounded out to Thessalonica, and all Macedonia, even to Achaia. An honored house and a much more honored occupant.

Her "praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches,"—and deservedly. Hers is a blessed memorial. She and her Christian sisters, became co-workers with Paul and Silas, Luke and Timothy, and other brethren in the Lord, in the great and glorious work of building up the kingdom of God, and advancing the cause of their Redeemer, in the midst of obloquy and reproach, of gainsaying and persecution. They are not content to go to heaven alone; they must induce their sisters at Philippi to renounce their idolatry, and join the happy band of pilgrims that are on their way to the better land—the New Jerusalem. Much and faithfully they labored, and their reward is on high—

"In souls renewed and sins forgiven."

They believed that woman has something to do for her Savior; that she, to whom the gospel has proved the greatest of earthly blessings, who owes to it her emancipation from the most degrading bondage, and her noble elevation to the rank of man's most trusted, loved and honored companionship, is under the weightiest obligations to labor in the gospel; to help forward, by all appropriate means, and by every agency permitted to her, the cause of her Lord and Master on the earth.

That woman can do much for the advancement of religion in the world, is too obvious to need the array of argument. But for her unwearied exertions, and her importunate prayers, religion would have made but little progress in many portions of the world, and many of the churches of Christ would have languished and died. Though hers it is not to expound the word of God in the sanctuary, or to take the leadership of "the sacramental host," it is hers to exert in the household, in society, in the varied walks of learning, and in the religious community, an all-pervading influence for good. She has the moulding of the rising generation in her own hands; and she, more than all others, can impress upon the youthful heart the image of Christ, and diffuse through all the departments of domestic and social life, the principles of morality and godliness.

And what she can do, she is bound to do. She may not retire from the public gaze, and seek her ease and pleasure in the quietude of domestic life, because she may not preach and teach in the congregation. She may not bury her one talent in a napkin, instead of putting it to use, simply because other two or ten talents were not committed to her. She is not made for idleness and indolence. Her admirable endowments were not bestowed upon her merely for show. She is constituted for something more honorable and useful, than merely to lounge and languish in the drawing-room, to grace a parlor, to shine in the brilliant saloon, to be petted and flattered, courted and waited upon, at home or abroad. She was made for action, for service, for high

and honorable occupation. She must not suffer her energies to stagnate for want of employment—suitable employment—such as will task her brain as well as her hands ; such as will call forth into active exercise, the highest, noblest powers of her being. She needs to be occupied with something more inspiring, more elevating, more intellectual, than sewing and stitching, and catering for the appetite, however necessary and indispensable it may be, that the household be properly cared for, in these respects. Higher and holier duties, also, demand her attention. Her nobler powers of mind and heart are to be tasked, if she would attain the elevation of which her nature is capable. She has a work to do for her Savior, which only she can do, and from which she can not be excused, which she can not neglect without serious injury to the best of causes.

Nor should she be willing to be excused if she could. It is a necessity of her being. Not otherwise can she escape that dwarfing of her intellectual powers, which, in so many cases, makes her the mere puppet of the hour, and so much the inferior of busy, hard-working, scheming, ambitious man. She needs something to do, commensurate with her mental and spiritual capabilities, her higher nature, her nobler powers. For want of it her life becomes objectless ; her conversation becomes insipid, frivolous, superficial, trivial, vapid ; she loses the respect of her brother man, and is treated as a mere toy or plaything. For want of it, she becomes a gossiping idler, or a helpless, hopeless victim of *ennui*, gloom and melancholy. She needs the impulse of a higher life, a purer atmosphere, a holier purpose.

“Wouldst thou from sorrow find a sweet relief?  
Or is thy heart oppressed with woes untold?  
Balm wouldst thou gather for corroding grief?  
Pour blessings round thee like a shower of gold.  
'T is when the rose is wrapped in many a fold  
Close to its heart, the worm is wasting there  
Its life and beauty ; not when all unrolled,  
Leaf after leaf, its bosom rich and fair,  
Breathes freely its perfumes throughout the ambient air.

Wake, thou that sleepest in enchanted bowers,  
Lest these lost years should haunt thee, on the night,  
When death is waiting for thy numbered hours,  
To take their swift and everlasting flight ;  
Wake, ere the earthborn charm unnerve thee quite,  
And be thy thoughts to work divine addressed ;  
Do something ; do it soon ; with all thy might ;  
An angel's wing would droop if long at rest,  
And God himself inactive were no longer blessed.

Some high or humble enterprise of good  
Contemplate, till it shall possess thy mind,  
Become thy study, pastime, rest and food,  
And kindle in thy heart a flame refined ;

Pray heaven with firmness thy whole soul to bind  
To this thy purpose ; to begin, pursue,  
With thoughts all fixed, and feelings purely kind,  
Strength to complete, and with delight review,  
And grace to give the praise where all is ever due."

Abundant, as are always the opportunities for being of service in the cause of her Redeemer, woman is called upon, with far more earnestness, and much more constantly, to work for her Saviour in time of war ; especially, such a war as is now raging over the breadth of this great land. The necessities of the country demand that the time, attention, and services of nearly a million of the most active, enterprising, and laborious of her sons should be diverted from the peaceful pursuits and occupations in which they are ordinarily employed, and devoted, almost or quite exclusively to the work of suppressing this gigantic rebellion. This vast number of men must, then, be separated for one, two, or three years, as the case may be, from their homes, the social circles in which they are accustomed to move, and the christian congregations to which they have been attached. Old associations, in consequence, are broken up ; new combinations, commercially and socially, are demanded ; other than the ordinary agencies, for the promotion of many of the educational and reformatory schemes of the age are called for ; and many of our dearest and most cherished institutions of benevolence are put into serious jeopardy. The exigencies of the occasion require, to some extent, a re-adjustment of our plans and calculations in almost all the departments of business, and of social, home, and religious life.

Two evils of great magnitude are to result from this social revolution, and are to be met with energy, and, if possible, to be overcome. The one necessarily results from the segregation of large bodies of men by themselves, afar from the mollifying refining, restraining, and sanctifying influences of the home, the family, and the church. Universal experience has conclusively demonstrated the wisdom of that providential arrangement, by which the sexes are so distributed in society, as to exert a constant influence over each other, stimulating, restraining, and all-pervading. Break up this arrangement, and separate the sexes entirely from each other, and the invariable tendency is to a greater laxity in manners and morals, to deterioration and demoralization. The most rigid discipline of military and naval rule, and the most stringent regulations that can be devised and adopted, are inadequate to arrest these tendencies. More especially are these results to be seen in the case of the sterner sex. The circumstances, in which the new States and Territories of the Pacific slope of America, so recently settled by the greed of silver and gold, were founded, clearly demonstrate the truth of these positions. The vast influx of men, unattended by



their wives and sisters, mothers and daughters, into a new country, where, for months and years, they were left to do very much as they pleased, and to act out the tendencies of their natures, unrestrained by the presence, except in comparatively rare cases, of virtuous female society, resulted most disastrously, both to the manners and the morals of the community. And only as this vast preponderance in numbers of the one sex over the other, has been checked and reduced, have the tendencies to some of the worst forms of barbarism been arrested and reversed.

The army is a vast aggregation of men, living together in camps and forts; separated from the gentle, yet restraining and mighty influences of domestic life, and brought under influences the most corrupting and demoralizing. The most of them are young, active, impassioned, bold, and enterprising men; acting upon one another, in circumstances the most unpropitious for the formation and cultivation of habits of morality and religion; where the vicious are emboldened to act out their depravity; and the virtuous are overborne and corrupted by the example, the conversation, and the wily artifices of the wicked; where the timid are stimulated to the indulgence of their sensual lusts, and rapidly acquire sufficient courage and boldness, in the use of vulgar, profane, and ribald language, in making light of serious things, in oaths and obscenity, to vie with the bravest and most desperate sons of Belial. Nowhere is the inestimable value of the domestic sanctuary so made apparent, and so demonstrated as in the camp.

Other influences, moreover, of the most demoralizing character, are ever at work upon the soldier's heart and life. Subjected, by the very necessities of military discipline, to the will of his superiors, to the word of command, and required, under the severest penalties, to render a prompt and implicit obedience, he speedily learns to act without a proper sense of moral responsibility; as a mere machine, and not as a man. His perceptions of right and truth are obscured; his moral sense deadened; his heart hardened; his principles corrupted, and the very worst tendencies of his depraved nature developed. He learns to steal, to plunder, to rob and to destroy, with but little or no compunction, both property and life. It is the very business of a soldier to capture, maim and kill. The life, to which he is called, is ever prompting him to the exercise of the most malignant passions—anger, wrath, hatred, malice, rage, rapacity and cruelty—a thirsting for human blood, and a passion for annihilating the foe. It blunts all the finer sensibilities, and develops the ferocious and brutal instincts of our nature to the utmost. A miracle of grace must be he, who returns from a protracted campaign as tender-hearted, as gentle in manners, as pure in

morals, as spiritual and as devout, as when he left the sanctuary of home, and went forth to mingle in the din and strife of sanguinary battle. Many, very many, of these our imperiled countrymen will not live to return; and those that do will not return as they went. The habits of vice, irreligion and infidelity acquired in the campaign will cling to them in the privacy of domestic life, and in many cases accompany them to the grave.

To a greater or less extent, many of these evil influences are felt beyond the camp. The war spirit pervades the whole community. We become familiar with deeds of rapine and blood; and learn to glory in the misfortunes, the disasters and the destruction of our fellow men,—in their utter ruin. We have already made rapid strides, as a nation, in this downward course, and are passing through a most perilous period; perilous, not only to the peace and prosperity of the nation, but to its moral and religious welfare.

The other evil to which I would refer, resulting from this great revolution, is the withdrawal of such an immense number of the most vigorous, active and enterprising men from posts of usefulness, from positions of great importance, and from associations of the most sacred character, at home. The husband disappears from the quiet abode, where the fond wife was wont to meet and greet him, on his daily return from labor and business, and where she looked to him for counsel and support. The father is taken from his children, and separated from them for months and years, at a period, when most they need his instructions and his paternal care. A sad and wearisome change comes over the loved home, where the son and brother gave such a charm to the domestic sanctuary. What shall fill the void—who make good the terrible privation?

A very large portion of our patriot army have gone forth from our Sunday schools; have been trained "in the fear and nurture of the Lord;" and, as they came to years, have become firm and active supporters of our religious congregations, our Sunday-schools, our Mission schools, and our benevolent institutions. Many of them have been among our most reliable teachers and church members. It can not be said of them, whatever may be said of others, "they are scarcely missed." They are missed—greatly missed. Not a few of our churches have been sadly and seriously crippled, and many a praying circle weakened, in numbers and in interest, by the heavy draft thus made on their membership.

In addition to this, it must be mentioned, that the war has called for large contributions from our men of wealth and liberality, to meet extraordinary expenditures, in the way of war committees, sanitary commissions, and bounties to volunteers. Multitudes also have been, by the sad reverses of the times, de-

prived of all their worldly property, and means of pecuniary support, thereby deranging, to a very great extent, and embarrassing the financial affairs of many of our religious congregations and benevolent societies.

In these various ways, the cause of religion is greatly imperiled by the war. The Great Revival of 1858 has been succeeded by a great declension; the thoughts and anxieties of the people have been mainly absorbed by the rebellion, and the immense exertions of the loyal people of the nation to suppress it; and but little is done for the spiritual improvement of the country. "The ways of Zion do mourn, because" so few "come to the solemn feasts." Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold. It is greatly to be apprehended, that the war will be followed by abounding profanity, dissipation, licentiousness, irreligion, and infidelity. All great wars have so resulted. Thither they tend; so they gravitate.

But, if religion dies out, the country is lost. "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Our "help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth." If religion languishes; if God's house be neglected; if the ordinances of the sanctuary be disregarded; what can we expect but to be delivered into the hands of our enemies? Never has there been a period in our history as a nation, (and probably never will there be again), when the providence of God has so loudly called upon the friends of religion to bestir themselves, and put forth their whole energies in the cause of the world's Redeemer. Never was there a louder call for unceasing, importunate prayer for the bleeding cause of humanity and God.

What now shall be done? to whom should we look to supply the places of the thousands and tens of thousands who have gone and are yet to go from our religious circles, to the camp and to the battle-field? God is calling away from us our sons, but our daughters remain; they cannot go. Can they be content to remain at home in idleness? Not, if they be patriots all; not, if they be Christians indeed. They will ask to be employed, to have the privilege of doing something for their country—their Saviour. So to do will, moreover, be vastly for their own personal advantage. It will give employment to many an idle hour. It will wake up many a dormant energy. It will keep their faculties from stagnation. It will make women of worth of many who heretofore have been little more than mere butterflies. It will develop a vast amount of talent that, for want of opportunity, has never made itself known even to its possessors. God is giving, to the loyal daughters of America, a most admirable occasion for learning what they can accomplish in the walks of benevolence and usefulness. Let them not neglect it.

It devolves on you, my Christian sisters, to make good, to the extent of your abilities, the deficiencies occasioned by the absence of your brothers, and their devotion to the cause of their suffering country. Our churches must not be suffered to languish for want of appropriate laborers. Women labored with Paul in the gospel, as they have with others of Christ's ministers in every age. None have labored so much as they. But for them, their prayers, their endeavors, their self-denying and unwearied services in the cause of Christ, the kingdom of God would have advanced but slowly on the earth. They are now the most reliable and the most efficient helpers in many of our churches. But for them what would become of our mission and Sunday-schools, our prayer meetings and our tract visitations? If they attended upon the services of the sanctuary no better than do the other sex, how vastly would our congregations be diminished! All honor to the sex! Let it be known what the church owes to woman.

"Not she, with trait'rous kiss, her master stung;  
Not she denied him with unfaithful tongue;  
She, when apostles fled, could danger brave—  
Last at his cross, and earliest at his grave."

What, then, it will be asked, can Woman do for her Saviour, in these times of distress and trouble? What, in and out of the army and navy? Much she can do for the spiritual welfare of her kindred and friends in camp, in garrison and on shipboard. She can bear them on her heart in her every approach to the throne of grace, and call down God's blessing on them daily. The feeblest of our sisters, the poorest and the most obscure, can offer the secret prayer for her absent ones, that shall find its way to the ear of the Lord of hosts, be received, regarded, and speedily answered. Rest assured, ye weeping, anxious daughters of Zion, you never plead, never pray in vain. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." How it comforts, re-assures, and supports our brave troops to know that the voice of earnest prayer is ever ascending, from so many fond hearts at home in their behalf! Remember their exposures to sudden death, and plead that they may be ready for the summons to God's bar. Never cease to pray and plead in the Saviour's name for their conversion and sanctification.

But you can do more for them. In every fond epistle that you send them, you can remind them of their danger, and plead with them to be reconciled to God. These silent monitors from home, wafted to them on the wings of the tenderest affection, have a mighty power over the soldier's heart; restraining, awakening, converting, subduing. Thus may you "save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins," at but little cost, too, on your own part. Neglect not, then, the gift that is in thee.

You can do still more for their spiritual welfare. Much is promised, in the Holy Scriptures, to the united prayers of God's people. Union is strength; in the family and in the state; in temporal and in spiritual affairs. When Peter was imprisoned by Herod, and his life put in jeopardy, "prayer was made, without ceasing, of the church unto God for him." The circumstances of our beloved country call in like manner for unceasing prayer, both private and public, unto God; and especially that the church of God may suffer no detriment in these days of peril; that our particular churches may be fully sustained, and their special work of mercy be prosecuted with vigor and success. Every conflict on the field of battle is a trumpet-call to the people of God, to greater fervency, frequency, and union of hearts in pleading with heaven. When our bravest and best are falling fast under the murderous blows of a horrid usurpation, and a giant iniquity, it is no time for their sisters and daughters, wives and mothers, to be making merry, to be sporting and frolicking in the gaieties of fashionable life, but to be gathering together for united and importunate prayer for the souls that are so rapidly passing into eternity, and for the imperiled interests of religion throughout the land. It is a time for the most earnest and fervid entreaty with God. At every announcement of a meeting for prayer, the people of God should resolve to put aside every other engagement, if possible, and flock to the place of prayer.

Here is something that you, my Christian sisters, can do for your Saviour. You are wanted at the prayer meeting. Your presence there cannot be dispensed with. Your brothers are away, and you must take their place. You cannot have their attendance as formerly, but you can come alone. Your prayer is of just as much importance unuttered though it be, as his who leads the devotions of the people. God heeds it as much; perhaps more. How can you keep away, one of you, when God is calling so loudly, and so many of your brothers have gone from you? No matter who they are, whose voice is heard in the prayer meeting, whether they can interest you or not. It is not to interest you, but to plead with God, that we meet. If your brethren are so cold, or so busy, as to neglect these precious seasons, shame them into duty by your redoubled diligence. And if they all stay away, then take it into your own hands and make a female prayer meeting of it.

So, too, you can do much for your Saviour, by your prompt and faithful attendance on the services of the sanctuary every sabbath-day. Never were you more needed there. Never could you absent yourselves with so little reason. Then, if ever, you should go up to the house of prayer, to seek God's blessing on your loved ones far away; on the cause of the divine Redeemer, on the souls of the perishing multitude, when so many are kept,



or stay away. If ever you are tempted to remain at home, because of a slight indisposition, or anything of the kind, call to mind the privations, exposures and sufferings of our soldiers, all endured for your sake, and be ashamed of your cowardly spirit. Show your patriotism by your increased devotion to the interests of religion. Nerve yourselves to a noble womanhood, and be of use in the church and the world. Come with others if you can; but, if not, come alone. Let who will prove false or neglectful, be it yours to say with Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

You can be of service, also, in the Sunday-school and mission-school. Our best teachers, in many of our churches, have responded to their country's call, and enlisted for the war. Able bodied men are at a premium just now, in many of the departments of Christian service. A million of them have gone to the war, and a million of their sisters must take their place, as far as possible, in the church and in the walks of benevolence. Which of you will volunteer for the army of the Lord, in these circumstances? Which of you will not? And why not? You are wanted, greatly wanted, for these labors of love.

Our churches, it is evident, while sending so many of their sons to the Army and Navy, so many to whom they have been wont to look for the prosecution of their work of evangelization at home and abroad, and from whom they have received their main support, must now, more than ever, depend on the reserve force of their sisters and daughters; and, we trust, will not depend in vain. You, my sisters, must not be deaf to the call, nor backward to follow where God leads. A noble, a glorious opportunity is now given you to vindicate your sex from the charge of frivolity and inefficiency, so frequently and falsely advanced; of asserting your importance, and demonstrating your ability in bearing the burdens, and promoting the interests, of humanity and religion. To you the conductors of our missionary societies must look to aid them in keeping the treasury of benevolence filled. To you the trustees of our Christian congregations must look, more than ever, for supplementary help in the support of public worship. To you the pastors of our churches must look, as never before, for sympathy and for co-operation in building up the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Will you let them look to you in vain? Which of you, in such a time as this, will be so lost to both patriotism and piety, as to ask, or even desire, to be excused from any service of which you are capable? Is there one among you that will not consecrate herself on the altar of her country's God, and earnestly ask of him, "Lord! what wilt thou have me to do?" Gird up your loins, and go forth, to be "ministering spirits," like the angels above, for them who shall be heirs of salvation; "for great is your reward in heaven."



## SERMON IX.

## JOY IN HEAVEN OVER REPENTING SINNERS.

## A SHORT SERMON.

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." LUKE XV : 10.

THE creation of a world is a great event. When the wonderful formation of our world was completed, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

The conversion of a sinner is a great event. It is the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit. When such an event takes place, there is joy in heaven among the angels ; there ought to be also great joy among the saints and children of God on earth. The text occurs in the beautiful parable of the lost sheep, in which the shepherd manifests his joy at having found the one that was lost. This illustrates the joy of heaven, among the angels when a lost sinner has been found by the Great Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to seek and save those who were lost.

This suggests the interesting inquiry :

Why does the repentance of a sinner occasion such rejoicing in heaven? Because,

1. It honors the Divine law and government. The repentance of the sinner proclaims to the universe "God's law is good ; his government is just and wise ; as long as I was in rebellion I was in the wrong." Whenever the tidings of this repentance come, a new tribute of respect is paid to the authority of God.

2. Because it illustrates the mercy and truth of God in Jesus Christ. Exhibition is therein made of the glorious designs contemplated in the covenant of redemption, and an earnest afforded that "Christ shall yet see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied," and that all the promises of the Father to his Son shall attain their complete fulfillment.

3. The repentance of a sinner occasions joy in heaven, because it displays the power of the Holy Ghost. The third person in the Godhead has equal honor with the Father in the presence of the angels. His influences are ever hallowed in the estimate of heavenly beings, and to their power are ascribed all the peace, and love, and joy which fill the ransomed soul, and every tear of penitence on earth bears new witness to the all-conquering energy of the Spirit.

4. The repentance of a sinner occasions joy in heaven, because honor is thus done to the gospel of the grace of God. This was given by inspiration of God—the divinely appointed means of light and life to a ruined world, the only charter of man's inheritance of the blessedness purchased for him in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This truth, illustrated and enforced by the Holy Ghost, aroused the conscience and sanctified the heart.

5. The repentance of a sinner occasions joy in heaven, because it lessens the number of the army of revolt. There is one heart less to pour out evil affections, one mind less to conceive iniquity, one tongue less to utter perverseness. Shame and defeat are carried into the phalanx of the enemy. Satan and evil men are disappointed by the loss of one upon whose sympathy and co-operation they had relied.

6. There is a lost and miserable soul recovered and made happy. The sympathies of heaven are kindled into fresh and powerful action when a ruined creature becomes the inheritor of such unspeakable blessedness as awaits the children of God.

7. A foundation is laid, moreover, for an endless series of holy exertion. The converted sinner becomes at once the minister of good to some other soul, and that soul in turn to others still, and eternity only can reveal the results of this glorious chain, thus created for the transmission of holy influence.

#### REMARKS.

1. How hard must that heart be which does not take pleasure in the repentance of a sinner! Such an one could not live in heaven, where there is always rejoicing over such an event.

2. He who takes no pleasure in the repentance of a sinner, must in the sight of heaven be regarded as in league with the power of darkness. He has no sympathies in common with holy beings.

3. How precious in the view of angels must be a revival of religion. If the repentance of one sinner occasions joy, how great must be their joy when hundreds turn to God.

4. The sinner has presented to him a new motive for repentance. If he will but repent, he can make angels happy. The purest and the noblest in the universe are ready to welcome and encourage him, as they strike their harps anew and sing the song of redeeming love.

5. The impenitent heart must be a dark spot in the creation of God. Angels would not contemplate the change with such delight, were it not that the unsanctified heart is to them the most loathsome object upon which they can look.

6. This subject must rebuke the cold and unbelieving spirit of those professors of religion who hardly know whether the

conversion of sinners would give them joy. It would seem a matter of doubt whether there are not some in the church who will feel but little sympathy with the hundred and forty and four thousand who will be gathered together at the marriage supper of the Lamb; and whether they will have any heart to add their cordial, Amen, to those ascriptions of praise which shall ascend to Him that sitteth on the throne.

7. Christians then should be making every possible exertion to persuade sinners to repent. If the repentance of a sinner is the pleasure of God and the pleasure of angels, it should surely be the delight of the Christian.

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## THE FULTON STREET PRAYER-MEETING.

A perpetual stream of prayer and blessing seem to flow from this consecrated and memorable spot. The promises of God seem to be verified that he will hear and answer the prayers of his people in a wonderful manner. The interest in the Fulton Street prayer-meeting seems to continue with no marked abatement through all the seasons, from one year to another. A feeling seems widely to prevail that all requests for prayer sent up to this meeting will be answered. An unusual and increased number of such requests have come up lately. The leader of the meeting remarked: "The great numbers of requests for prayer, coming from all parts of the country and even from the army, are proofs of the greatly awakened interest in the Christian heart all the land over. I can sympathize with this request which asks for

prayer for the last of five sons, for I have had a brother converted who was the last of five sons; and this very morning, for the first time in all his life, I heard his voice in prayer—leading the family in our devotions. You may rest assured it was a melting time."

A young man, a mere youth, rises and says: "I have been converted in answer to prayer, and to-morrow I expect to sail to join the Southern army."

I am wedded to this place as the spot where God had mercy on my soul. Oh! how precious it is to me. I mean to speak for Jesus. I mean to be faithful. Something seems to tell me I shall never be in this meeting again. If never here again, I shall meet you in heaven. All is well with me. I have no will of my own. Pray for me."

A letter was read to the Fulton Street Prayer-Meeting, re-

questing prayer for a church where a work of divine grace is in progress, which commenced during the Week of Prayer. Several have been converted and more are seeking to know what they shall do to be saved. But the church is not in a state sufficiently awake. "Oh! pray for us," says the writer, "that we may be zealous, and that we may have more faith."

The Pastor of a church in Philadelphia sends his request to the praying ones in the Fulton-street meeting for their prayers for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the church over which he is placed. A blessing from on high is the great burden of desire.

Another request comes from a town in Massachusetts, which says: "May I not ask you to pray for poor sinners in our place? We have not had a revival here for 34 years. Our church seems to be very much united. We have met and prayed very many times for a special blessing. There is an interest here, and several have been blessed with a new heart. Others are anxious about their salvation."

A Western church writes that a revival has begun, and has been going on since the Week of Prayer. Many have been converted. Sinners are awakened. The request is for prayer, for a wide-spread re-

val, and a general effusion of heavenly grace.

A man rose in the meeting and said he had a request to make:—It is prayer for himself that he may become a Christian, and for a son that he may be converted. "How can I expect," says the speaker, "that my son will be converted, when I set before him no Christian example?" A man in the back part of the room springs to his feet, and says: "Oh! do pray for me!" and then drops down into his place again. This seems to be all he can say.

A mere youth says: "We have established a meeting for boys and young men in Jersey City. We go into the streets, and into the Sabbath-schools, and invite the young into the meeting; and it is now very fully attended, and many are anxious. We have resolved to spend all this week in prayer. I thought I would come here and ask you to pray for us."

An army-officer arose and said: "the general expectation is, that we are on the eve of a great revival of religion. God says, 'Bring all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, and see if I will not pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room to receive it.'"